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ABSTRACT

An Indian Education Resources Center has been established in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to improve educational opportunities for American Indian students. Part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Central Office of Indian Education Program, the center was established after a thorough review of the Bureau's Central Office education operations revealed a need to locate some Washington, D.C. office services closer to the scene of action. Therefore, a Field Service Office was established in Albuquerque, and part of the Washington-based education staff located there. In August 1972 the name was changed from Field Services to the Indian Education Resources Center. The center's main goal is to serve Indian education by providing leadership or help for change, and resources for improvement and advocacy of Indian rights. It provides services to Indian students enrolled in public and Federal schools and colleges and universities. The center includes five divisions: (1) the Division of Evaluation, Research and Development; (2) the Division of Continuing Education; (3) the Division of Educational Assistance; (4) the Division of School Facilities; and (5) the Division of Educational Audio-Visual Services. This paper discusses the services provided by each division. (NQ)

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"AN INDIAN EDUCATION RESOURCES CENTER"

--Dr. William J. Benham, Administrator
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To improve educational opportunities for Indian students, an Indian Education Resources Center has been established in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The main goal of the Center is to serve Indian education by providing leadership or help for change, resources for improvement and advocacy of Indian rights.

In 1974, of the more than 200,000 Indian students 5 to 18 years of age, about 47,500 were in Federal schools. Of course, these, together with those involved in adult education activities, are the main concern of the Center. At the same time, there is concern and help available to a limited extent to the more than 130,000 attending public schools and the 10,500 attending other schools in the 5 to 18 age group. The Center also provides services to the students enrolled in colleges and universities.

The Center is part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Central Office of Indian Education Programs. It was established after a thorough review of the Bureau's Central Office education operations revealed a need to locate some Washington office services closer to the scene of action. As a consequence, a Field Service Office was established in Albuquerque, and part of the Washington-based education staff located there. The name was changed from "Field Services" to the "Indian Education Resources Center" in August 1972. There are five divisions in the Center, and the services they provide are:

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The Division of Evaluation, Research and Development provides consultative services in curriculum development, evaluation and educational research.

This Division coordinates the evaluation and review of education programs which will provide information necessary to effect long-range or immediate improvement in programs. It reviews new and innovative educational programs for Bureau schools. Consultant services are available in general curriculum planning, school administration as well as several specialized areas such as cultural arts, bilingual education and science. It maintains a collection of research data relative to Indian Education and is responsible for preparation of Indian Education Resources Center publications.

Recent examples of these services are found in the school needs assessments which the Division has assisted in at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Choctaw, White Shield, Southern Pueblos Agency and many others. Over forty published research and evaluation reports are now available together with a wide variety of curriculum bulletins and other materials.

This Division has also provided leadership in many areas including: (1) the development of a code of student rights and responsibilities which recognized the rights of students in Federal schools to due process ahead of the Supreme Court decision.

(2) the development and monitoring of progress on an objective later adopted by the President which provided that "By the end of Fiscal Year 1975, in at least one-fourth (50) of the Bureau schools by official action of a tribal or Alaskan village government, a choice of the management system will be made by those served by the school." This objective gives meaning to the term "self-determination" when applied to the patrons of Federal schools. It also gives

them the "psychological edge" in determining whether the schools remain Federal or become public, contract or other types.

(3) a Student Record System which constitutes a vital initial step in the development of a management information system should result in better service to the clientele of the Bureau's education program.

(4) Through information dissemination, the Division gives attention to the many notable developments occurring in Indian Education, including bilingual, bicultural education.

The Division of Continuing Education provides consultation and funding advocacy for programs serving handicapped students, career development and vocational rehabilitation. It provides policy direction for Adult Education and the Higher Education Financial Assistance programs and coordinates efforts in these areas in the broader Career Development Program with the Office of Tribal Resources Development. It provides interagency liaison with Federal and other agencies that have postsecondary, career education and education for the handicapped programs.

The concept of Career Development, of which career education, adult education, higher education assistance and adult vocational training are component parts, is designed to provide maximum effectiveness and coordination of effort for the individual applicant.

Efforts in working with the Office of Education have resulted in a doubling of special education funds to BIA and legislation which recognizes the BIA, in effect, as a 51st state. Funding for Higher Education increased from Approximately 22-1/2 million dollars in FY 1974 to over 32 million dollars in

1975. Area meetings and Career Guidance Institutes have been held to promote the career development concept.

This Division has also provided leadership in varied ways including the development of a testing policy for Federal schools which recognizes the cultural linguistic and other limitations of standardized tests for Indian students and a means of planning and evaluating out-of-class activities. Most important, all federally operated schools have available programs which make education of the handicapped available within the context of the regular classroom.

The Division of Educational Assistance coordinates the Johnson O'Malley, Elementary and Secondary Education Act Titles and other flow-through funding programs. It assists in the development of plans for specific services to Indian students in public or contract schools including advice and assistance in the preparation, renewal, administration and monitoring of JOM contracts with eligible school districts.

It provides for the allocation of funds, project approval and monitoring of programs under the National Defense Education Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, especially Titles I, II and III of ESEA. Assists in planning, coordinating and requesting funds from other non-BIA sources such as HEW, foundation grants, etc.

Assistance to public schools now totals over $33,000,000 with increasing direction and control over the funds being placed in the hands of Indian people. The largest of the ESEA programs, Title I, provides services to over 30,000 students, employing approximately 400 teachers, 1,200 aides, and 55 other professionals. The current year allocation plus the carryover of

unexpended funds from last year allows nearly $500 per student. Major program thrusts are in the areas of general academic remediation, language arts and reading, special education and math. All projects are developed with the participation and review of parental committees.

This Division has also provided leadership in a revision of the regulations and manual under which the Johnson O'Malley contracts are carried out. This thrust has greatly intensified parental involvement in the education of their children.

The Division of School Facilities assists in the development of long-range planning, educational specifications and budget justifications for school construction. Consultative services on space planning and selection of school sites, procurement of furnishings and equipment for new construction and training for school staff members in the usage of new equipment and facilities.

Last year, the Division worked with areas, tribes and local school boards in the planning phase of 15 educational projects. Equipment installations were completed at 18 projects including 12 kindergartens, and equipment was ordered for 32 projects. This assistance will contribute to making operational by September 1975, new facilities at Wanblee, Santa Rosa, Cherokee, Acoma, Casa Blanca and Ramah. A document entitled "Criteria for Priorities and Outline of Long-Range Construction Plan" for use in establishing Bureau school facilities priorities was prepared and will be implemented for the FY 1977 school construction program.

This Division has provided leadership in getting full tribal and parental involvement in the planning of education facilities.

The Division of Educational Audio-Visual Services, located in Brigham City, Utah, distributes 16 mm educational films to Bureau schools; limited services to public schools with predominant Indian enrollment. Maintains a still picture file of Bureau activities with prints available for use in schools and publications. The Division plans and produces audio-visual materials, including 16 mm educational and documentary films which relate Bureau programs and policies to Indian people; cost of production must be borne by requesting office.

Over 40,000 films are shipped yearly to schools operated or funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Recent examples of films which have been produced are "Education in Eskimo," a tri-lingual presentation demonstrating the teaching of primary level students in their Native language and in English, and "Children of Akiachak," documenting the early childhood education program which received the Educational Pacesetter Award as one of the outstanding Title III programs in the country. Production at the present time includes a film oriented to the needs for a high school program.

In closing, you realize, of course, that while these efforts have been attributed to individual divisions of the Indian Education Resources Center, they really are the result of teamwork within the entire Office of Indian Education Programs. Area, agency personnel and tribal leaders have had a substantive role in the efforts cited. Other things could be mentioned such as the recent survey of the preferences of tribal leaders and parents served by the Bureau. This has resulted in a revision of the Bureau's education manual which reflects the goals which parents and tribal leaders want for Indian Education. These will provide a national direction for Bureau programs.

It is the hope, the aim, the goal that these services to schools serving Indian students will be able to help tribal groups, school boards, agency and area staff members improve educational opportunities for Indian students.

Speech made at the Sixteenth Annual Indian Education Conference, Friday, April 4, 1975, Tempe, Arizona. THEME: "An Education for Every American Indian."